

IN THE MIDDLE

Mouse Clicks



On October 1, approximately 25 members of the laptop Class of '02 received iBooks. This completes the distribution of laptops to members of the faculty. The current District replacement cycle would provide for teachers to receive a laptop upgrade every five years.

At this week's meeting, we explained that this year's iBooks, while configured similarly to the laptops distributed last year, include a new GPS feature (so that we are able to locate the computers at all times). In all seriousness, we believe that this initiative has enhanced the educational, instructional, administrative, and professional development missions of the Middle School. Nowhere has this been more dramatic than with teachers whose laptops have commuted back and forth with them to school every day.



We have included this month's STI courses and Early Bird Technology workshops in our Professional Development Calendar (page 2). Middle School teachers might also want to explore a Web-based opportunity we wrote about last year. The *Atomic Learning Library* (www.atomiclearning.com) provides an extensive library of software tutorials. The User ID is *scarsdalems*; the password is *openbook*.



While on the subject of Internet resources, Channel Thirteen/WNET is offering access to a video-on-demand service of over 1400 instructional television programs. The catalog (www.thirteen.org/edonline/itv) is searchable by subject area and New York State Learning Standards. The User ID is *ny.scarsdalems*; the password, *thirteen*.



Take a look at the District's redesigned Web Site. School and subject-related content is being updated. The site also features a web-based calendar of District events.



Please call Vicky Beardsley (x.2651) to schedule classes, laptops, and other Computer Center equipment. Also, call Vicky with all tech. support concerns. We feel we can do a better job addressing every problem if she can log the call and forward the problem to the right one of us.



eMacs, iMacs in the Labs... and a Laptop in Every Classroom

Our labs are in great shape. One room has 25 new eMacs; the other room has 25 new iMacs (you know the great commercials). Lab upgrades mean, of course, that the CAMP Room as well as most classrooms have received an upgrade also. The average classroom now has 2.68 computers, with the District's four year replacement cycle, most are iMacs. Most classrooms now have technology that only a year or two ago was found only in labs.

Our ongoing efforts to bring educational technology into the classroom received further support with the addition this fall of 10 new laser printers, 10 new video projectors, and approximately 10 new laptops for the classroom carts. The new printers will allow us to lower the number of computers (and classrooms) throughout the building sharing a single printer. The additional laptops allow us to bring a cart of 15 computers into any classroom in the school.

Even as the opportunity for students to be working in a classroom or lab on their own computer becomes increasingly the norm, we are reminded that not so long ago we believed that even a single computer in a classroom could change a child's educational experience. While many teachers' professional development and productivity have been significantly advanced through the District's Laptop Initiative, the new video projectors should make presenting from laptops -- and other creative educational applications of *this* single computer -- an increasingly commonplace teaching technique and not just something for special occasions.



Jaguar is the real thing. especially now that many key Mac applications, including most programs from Microsoft, Adobe Systems, and Macromedia, come in versions designed for OS X. With enhanced Windows compatibility as a bonus, a move to Jaguar is a clear winner. (Stephen H. Wildstrom, BusinessWeek Online, Oct 1)

Having addressed recent hardware acquisitions, we would like to focus briefly on software, specifically Apple's operating system. Since January 2002, all new Macs have shipped with OS X (our computers run OS 9.2.2). Like a lot of schools, we have resisted this migration (we even strip OS X off our new machines and reinstall the familiar operating system) because of our reliance on software that has yet to be rewritten and because of the staff development that will be required to retrain users for a significant upgrade.

Nonetheless, this transition is not only inevitable (Apple has made it clear that OS X is *THE* Mac operating system), it is desirable. Those of us who have been using Jaguar (as 10.2 is called) can say without reservation that its combination of features and reliability is well worth any effort required to make the move. We have, in fact, left Jaguar installed on this year's laptops and will make it available to individual users who ask for the upgrade. Look for Jaguar to be featured prominently in our Early Bird Technology Series.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

You can find information about the following technology courses, as well as other STI programs, at the STI's web site. Online registration is available.

www.scarsdaleschools.org/sti

- 10/8 #2663 The Center for Instructional Technology Innovation: An Advanced Technology Research Group. Jerry Crisci.
- 10/10 *Easy Grade Pro*. Early Bird Technology Workshop #1 Fountain Dining Room, 7:15 AM
- 10/17 #2650 Online Course. Jerry Crisci, Ken Holvig
- 10/18 #2659 Computer and the Secondary Language Arts Curriculum. Doug Rose
- 10/29 *Let the Big Cat Run: A First Look at OS X and Apple's New Jaguar Operating System*. Early Bird Technology Workshop #2 Fountain Dining Room, 7:15 AM
- 10/29 #2646 Broadcast Journalism for Teachers. Ken Holvig, Andy Verboys
- 10/29 #2661 Research in Educational Technology: FileMaker Pro. Doug Rose



BiblioBytes

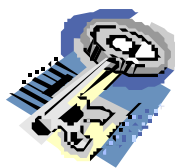
Liz Waltzman
Sharon Waskow

The Library's Web Site, with over 3,000 visitors, continues to offer a wealth of information and resources. Our new links and subscriptions:

- New York City Special*: NYC history, statistics, landmarks, interviews... [Link on library page](#).
- Access Excellence*: Educational content from the National Health Museum Web Site. *See Site of the Month*.
- The WhyFiles*: The science behind the news. *Fountain House: Class Projects: Long Term...*
- New York Philharmonic Kidzone*: Interactive audio/video. *See Teacher Resources*.
- Global Connection: the Middle East*: PBS site – timeline, economy, politics, religion, culture. *See Site of the Month*.
- History Matters*: Annotated Web directory. *See Teacher Resources*.

New Subscriptions

- Ebsco*: Replaces Infotrac (periodical database). *Password for home access: scarsdalems*.
- ABC-Clio*: Geography, American History and Government. *Password for home access: scarsdale*.



SMS NETS Project, Year Two

Now in its second year, the Middle School's NETS (National Educational Technology Standards) Project will continue to serve as a clearinghouse of best practices for teachers looking to integrate technology into their teaching. Last year, fifty-two teachers (approximately half of the faculty) contributed 135 activities to the Project Database. The database allows teachers to cross-reference student work using educational technology with national subject area and technology standards. Teachers' identification of NETS Performance Indicators for each of their activities has helped us understand more about the work Scarsdale Middle School students are being asked to do in this area.



We look to advance the Middle School's work in this area in several ways. We are interested in seeing teachers continue their participation in the project by updating records for activities repeated this year, as well as adding records to the database for new activities using educational technology.

We would also like to see the database become a source of ideas for teachers designing activities for their class, so we have made the catalog available on our FileMaker Pro Server. You should be able to open the database from any networked computer by opening FileMaker Pro, clicking on "Hosts," and selecting "ActivityLog." The password "catalog" will allow you to peruse a *read-only* copy of the database. Go to the "Groups" layout to select activities designed for a given academic discipline. Activities correlating with the NETS Performance Indicators listed above can be accessed through the "NETS/PI" layout.

Also addressing the goal of making more accessible the exciting work that you plan in the Computer Center is a related project. We have traded in our old calendar program for a new Computer Center scheduling system created in FileMaker Pro, which we have also made available to the faculty. Here, as well, we believe that giving teachers access to the calendar will not only help them to schedule their technology activities, but serve as a source of ideas as they see the computer-based work their colleagues are planning. Log on as above: *Open FileMaker Pro: Hosts: SMSCal (Password: Center)*.